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MEYER'S "THE GRADED SUNDAY SCHOOL"

The Graded Sunday School in Principle and Practice. By HENRY H. MEYER.. New York: EATON AND MAINS; Cincinnati: JENNINGS AND GRAHAM, 1910 (Modern Sunday School Manuals. Edited by CHARLES FOSTER KENT in collaboration with JOHN T. MCFARLAND). p. viii + 241.

If good method and correct discipline are important in the management of the secular school, they are essential in religious instruction, to which only a limited time is allowed by most religious denominations. Having this in mind, Mr. Meyer makes a strong plea in this little book for a more general introduction of the graded system in Sunday School work and offers some definite suggestions how this could be carried out. It appears that such an appeal is still necessary, in spite of the rapid advance made in recent years in the theory and practice of education.

Mr. Meyer judiciously divides his book into three parts, discussing first the theoretical aspect of the question, then its historical development and concluding with several concrete examples, proving the superiority of this method.

The first part might in itself form an excellent guide for Sunday School teachers. The author concisely but clearly presents here the relationship of the various elements of the school, showing the duties of each and the way for a harmonious working for them. The author lays especial stress on the educational element in religious instruction (p. 7), still necessary in many schools where instruction sometimes tends to become a species of evangelization or a means of conversion. A plan of organization and grading covering the whole course of Sunday School work is presented in chapter VIII, supplemented by a detailed discussion of the subject-matter of instruction given in the following chapter.

In the second part, Mr. Meyer gives a résumé of the historical development of the graded system through the conventions of the International Sunday School Union and in several individual church organizations.

The author concludes his argument by giving several notable examples of schools where the graded system has been in operation. The Model Sunday School of Columbia University (Teachers' College), the University Congregational School of Chicago, and the Hyde Park Baptist Sunday School of Chicago are given detailed treatment in the first chapter, while other typical schools, among them the School of Temple Emanu-El of New York are discussed in another chapter. The last few chapters are devoted to some practical suggestions as to the introduction of the graded system.

Considering that out of the 1,400,000 officers and teachers of the Sunday Schools in the United States, only 10,000 are known to have received any training, we pardon the author for giving so much space to the minutest details, almost precluding any initiative on the part of teacher or superintendent.

The book is provided with a useful summary, containing questions for review, and also with a Selected Bibliography of books that will prove useful to the earnest teacher.

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